the general industrial policies. As regards duty-free import of technology and raw materials at concessional rates, decisions in this regard are taken keeping in view the exigencies of the situation.

Long-term Loan from IMF

*282. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to start negotiations with the International Monetary Fund for a fresh long-term loan to meet the exigencies arising out of continued adverse balance of payments position; and

(b) if so, whether any final decision has since been taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Seizure of hashish in Bombay

*283. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item which appeared in the Hindustan Times of the 15th November, 1988 to the effect that in the biggest haul in recent times, Bombay Customs seized 2,600 Kgs. of hashish valued at over Rs. 23 crores;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and whether any arrest have been made in this connection: and

(c) what action Government have taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. On 13th November, 1988 the Bombay Customs seized 2,630 kgs. of hashish (charas), concealed in 90 drums out of a consignment of 275 drums under the export declaration as 'vermiculite', meant for export to Barcelona (Spain) for a consignee in Netherlands. However, investigation revealed that the ultimate recipient of these goods was a person based in Toronto, Ontario.

The precise value of the seized drugs cannot be determined as this is dependent upon various factors like purity of the drug, place of origin and sale, local demand and supply, etc.

The residential premises of the suspected persons have been searched. Two persons involved in this attempt of smuggling have been identified. They are absconding.

No arrest has been made so far in connection with the seizure in question.

Modernisation of jute mills

*285. SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the toal amount earmarked, and the amount out of that actually disbursed till 30th September, 1988 under the modernisation of jute mills programme;

(b) whether Government are aware that under the cloak of modernisation, jute mills are importing machinery like plastic tape lines to make union bags;

(c) whether he has received a representation from the All India Tape Manufacturers Association in this behalf; and

(d) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative, whether it amounts to violation of the Jute Packaging Control Act, providing

compulsory use of jute in packaging in certain sectors and what is the reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM): (a) A total amount of Rs. 150 crores has been earmarked by the financial insituations under the Jute Modernisation Fund Scheme to be utilised over a period of 5 years beginning from 1st November, 1986. Out of this an amount of Rs. 3.63 crores was disbursed to 4 jute mills upto 30th September, 1988.

(b) and (c) The All India Flat Tape Manufacturers Association have alleged in a representation made to the Government that the financial institutions are providing liberal financial assistance to the jute industry for the duty-free import of HDPE tape plant and circular looms ostensibly for the manufacture of poly jute bags. The factual position is that the financial institutions have not sanctioned any assistance for import of plastic tape lines under the Jute Modernisation Fund Scheme. However, loans are being sanctioned for installation of circular looms along with the tape lines to enable the jute mills to modernise their weaving section and to manufacture HDPE union jute bags. While the jute industry enjoys duty-free import facility for circular looms along with various other specified list of machinery items to assist it under the modernisation programme, plastic tape lines do not form part of this list.

(d) It is clarified that the definition of "Jute pacaking material" under the Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987 means any packaging material containing not less then 75% by weight of jute.

Export of the products of Orissa based aluminium company

*289. SHRI YALLA SESI BHUSHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government have decided to export the entire production of the Orissa based National Aluminium Company during 1988-89;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this decision will lead to large scale shortage of the critical raw material; and

(c) what is the need for the Government to take this decision on the heels of the shifting of aluminium imports from the canalised to the open general licence list which itself was opposed by domestic user industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) Orissa based National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) will be exporting a part of its production around 3,80,000 tonnes of surplus Alumina and about 15,000 tonnes of high grade Aluminium metal after fully meeting the statutory obligation of production of Electrical Conductor Grade Aluminium for domestic consumption during 1988-89.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Aluminium including aluminium rods were placed on OGL with effect from 26th July, 1988 with marginal level of customs duty of Rs. 500 per tonne in order to bridge any demand-supply gap. The decision to export some quantity of alumina and aluminium was taken by the Government while reviewing the balance of payments position.

Central assistance to remove exploitation of tribals by middlemen in the trade relating to minor forest produce in Madhya Pradesh

*290. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state: